

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 2011

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT IT

SUBJECT: MILAN PRI LEADER: US MUST BLOCK PCI

1. PRI MILAN CITY COUNCILMAN WHO IS AMONG YOUNG LEADERS OF ANTI-PCI, ANTI-LAMALFA WING OF INFLUNTIAL MILAN PRI TOLD US DEC 20 THAT COMMUNISTS WOULD BE IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WITHIN SIX MONTHS AS THINGS WERE GOING. HE SAID ONLY US HAD ENOUGH INFLUENCE TO STOP ICI ADVANCE AND HE URGED IN STRONGEST TERMS THAT WE MOUNT AGGRESSIVE, BEHIND-SCENES CAMPAIGN BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE.

2. COUNCILMAN SAID HE HAD HAD HOUR'S TALK WITH PRI PRESIDENT LA MALFA LAST WEEK IN WHICH LA MALFA TOLD HIM THAT "THE AMERICANS ARE WITH US", MEANING THAT AMERICANS UNDERSTOOD THAT OVERALL SITUATION DEMANDED ACQUIESCENCE IN PCI ACCESSION TO GOVERNMENT. COUNCILMAN SAID HE HOPED LA MALFA WAS TALKING THROUGH HIS HAT BUT FEARED THAT POSSIBLY HE WAS NOT. IF US HAD GIVEN UP ON OPPOSING COMMUNISTS, HE CONTINUED, THAT MEANT PCI WOULD SOON BE IN GOVERNMENT AND WOULD REMAIN THERE FOR DECADES.

3. WE DESCRIBED USG'S AND AMBASSADOR'S TOTAL OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT THAT INCLUDED PCI. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RECORD WAS CLEAR. IF ADDITION, WE DESCRIBED AMBASSADOR'S UNEQUIVOCAL VIEWS ON SUBJECT
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AS EXPRESSED IN CLOSED DISCUSSIONS DURING RECENT TRIP TO MILAN AND NOTED THAT THEY LEFT NO ROOM FOR DOUBT. WE ADDED THAT OUR ANTI-COMMUNIST FRIENDS WHO NONETHELESS QUESTIONED FIRMNESS OF OUR OPPOSITION TO PCI WERE ONLY GIVING GREATER CURRENCY TO INTER-
PRETATION CONGENIAL TO COMMUNISTS THEMSELVES.

4. ALTHOUGH COUNCILMAN SAW SOME MERIT IN LATTER POINT, HE CLAIMED

TO SEE NO EVIDENCE THAT USG WAS DOING ANYTHING TO STOP PCI
BEYOND SAYING WE WISHED IT WOULD STOP. THAT WAS NOT ENOUGH. IN
ABSENCE OF AGGRESSIVE STANCE ON OUR PART, EVERYONE WOULD CONTINUE TO
DOUBT WE MEANT BUSINESS.

5. WHAT DID COUNCILMAN THINK WE COULD PROPERLY DO THAT WE WERE NOT
ALREADY DOING? HE REPLIED THAT FIRST, USG SHOULD BE ATTACHING
STRINGS TO ITS AID TO ITALY, THAT THERE WAS NOTHING ILLEGITIMATE ABOUT
T
REQUIRING FROM THOSE IN POWER QUID PRO QUO FOR OUR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.
CE.
SECONDLY, WE SHOULD BE PRESSURING DEMOCRATIC PARTIES TO CEDE POWER TO
YOUNGER PEOPLE, TELLING THEM THAT VARIOUS LA MALFA'S, MORO'S, AND
OTHERS HDA TO GO.

6. UNLESS WE WERE WILLING TO USE OUR LEVERAGE IN
THESE WAYS AND DO IT FAST, PCI WOULD SOON BE IN GOVERNMENT. IT
WAS NO USE HOPING CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WOULD WITHSTAND COMMUNIST
PRESSURE FOR ENTRY. THEY WERE PARTY WITH CORRUPT RULING STRATUM
WHICH WANTED ABOVE ALL ELSE TO STAY IN POWER.

7. SO US, ACCORDING TO COUNCILMAN, WAS ONLY INFLUENCE THAT STOOD
BETWEEN ITALY AND PCI PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT. AND JUDGING
BY WHAT HE COULD SEE IF USG PERFORMANCE TO DATE ON THIS
SUBJECT, HE WAS VERY SKEPTICAL THAT AMERICANS WANTED TO BLOCK THE
WAY.
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FINA

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